



CLIPPITY CLIPS

The Golden Woods Riding School Ltd.



GWRS Open Novice Dressage Schooling Show

Sunday, May 18, 2003, 10 a.m. start: Dressage Tests - Walk Trot, Training level 1, Prix Caprilli (Flat work with small jumps), Training level 2, Training level 3. Separate Pony Division.

GWRS Summer Riding Camps

The cost is \$250 per person (includes GST) with \$100 deposit. Only 8 riders per week, prizes for all. Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Camp dates are June 30 to July 14, July 7 to July 11, July 14 to July 18, July 21 to July 25, Aug 11 to Aug 15, Aug 18 to Aug 22, and Aug 25 to Aug 29.

Any additional information and entry forms for camps or show can be requested by phone 519-856-0505, fax 519-856-0506, download from our webpage www.goldenwoods.on.ca or email gwrsgolden.net.

Now accepting new riders for the spring and summer sessions. Golden Woods Riding School, 8295 Indian Trail, Rockwood. We offer recreational English riding lessons year round, specializing in Dressage and Eventing, for ages seven and older, adult and beginner lessons. Please feel free to visit us.



Spring is finally here! But along with the warm weather come mosquitoes and fleas. Talk to your Veterinarian about the many products that give heartworm, flea and worm protection - for your pet and your family this year.

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Veterinarians advise on the threat of West Nile virus

By KAREN DALLIMORE

While we all brace ourselves waiting for mosquito season to begin, equine experts are echoing a common refrain: If you haven't yet had your horses vaccinated for West Nile virus, you need to start now.

Dr. Robert Wright, Equine Veterinary Specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, is holding information sessions throughout the province about the threat of West Nile virus to horses. Recently he spoke to a packed house of concerned horse owners at the Country Heritage Park in Milton. In agreement with the panel of equine veterinarians on hand, Dr. Wright recommended that West Nile virus now be included with rabies and tetanus as the basis of your vaccination program for horses, donkeys and mules.

The vaccine for horses requires two injections, three to six weeks apart, followed by an annual booster. "You need both shots, and you need 30 days after the second shot to achieve full protection," says Dr. Wright. That means starting the first injection as soon as possible for optimum protection by the vaccine. For horses in higher risk

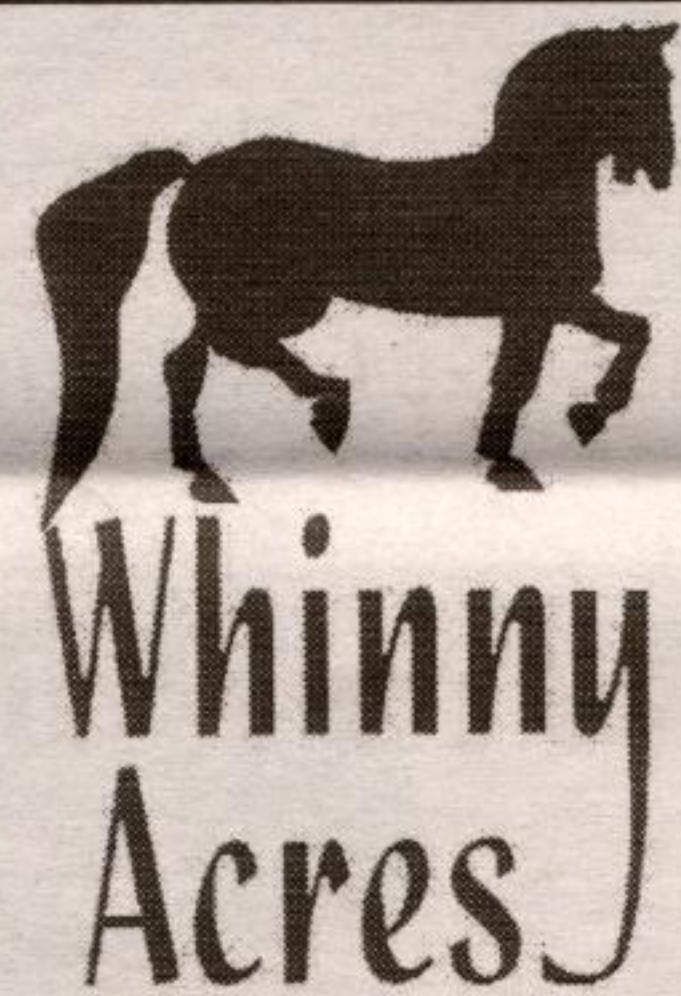
situations, such as those living in heavy mosquito areas, another booster may be recommended in six months: Discuss this with your vet. Each shot costs around \$35, and there have been few adverse reactions to the vaccine.

There is no question that West Nile virus needs to be taken seriously. Last year in Ontario, of the 107 horses that showed clinical signs of West Nile virus, one third died. The virus can take hold quickly; symptoms include listlessness, trembling, loss of appetite, stumbling and convulsions. Supportive medical treatment needs to be started immediately.

Last year, Dr. Chris Gaul of Campbellville Equine Services treated 11 horses for West Nile virus. One horse died, one horse had lingering symptoms for four months, but most recovered within eight to ten weeks. A horse afflicted with West Nile virus needs prompt and aggressive medical treatment to help it through the initial stages of the illness. In suspected cases of West Nile virus, while awaiting test results, Dr. Gaul initiates the same treatment as he uses for other nervous system afflictions.

Humans, horses and birds such as crows, jays, owls and hawks are the main species affected by West Nile virus. What about pets? According to Dr. Stephen Ball of the Brookville Veterinary Clinic, technically all animals can contract West Nile virus. However, a study out of New York last year found that although 10-15% of the dogs sampled had been exposed to the virus, none showed clinical signs. "It's not that they can't get West Nile virus, it's just very rare," Dr. Ball explains. Many pet owners are concerned, and at this point he recommends doing common-sense things to reduce mosquito exposure, especially if your pet is immune-suppressed.

Those in the health professions classify West Nile virus as an emerging disease: Experts don't really know what to expect this year, but they are trying to make predictions about it based upon past experience with similar viruses. "The text book hasn't been written yet on West Nile virus," says Dr. Wright, noting that prevention through vaccination is "one of the few things we have in our toolbox."



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